

THE BROCHURE SERIES

OF ARCHITECTURAL ILLUSTRATION.

VOL. III.

NOVEMBER, 1897.

No. II.

LIBRARY ARCHITECTURE.

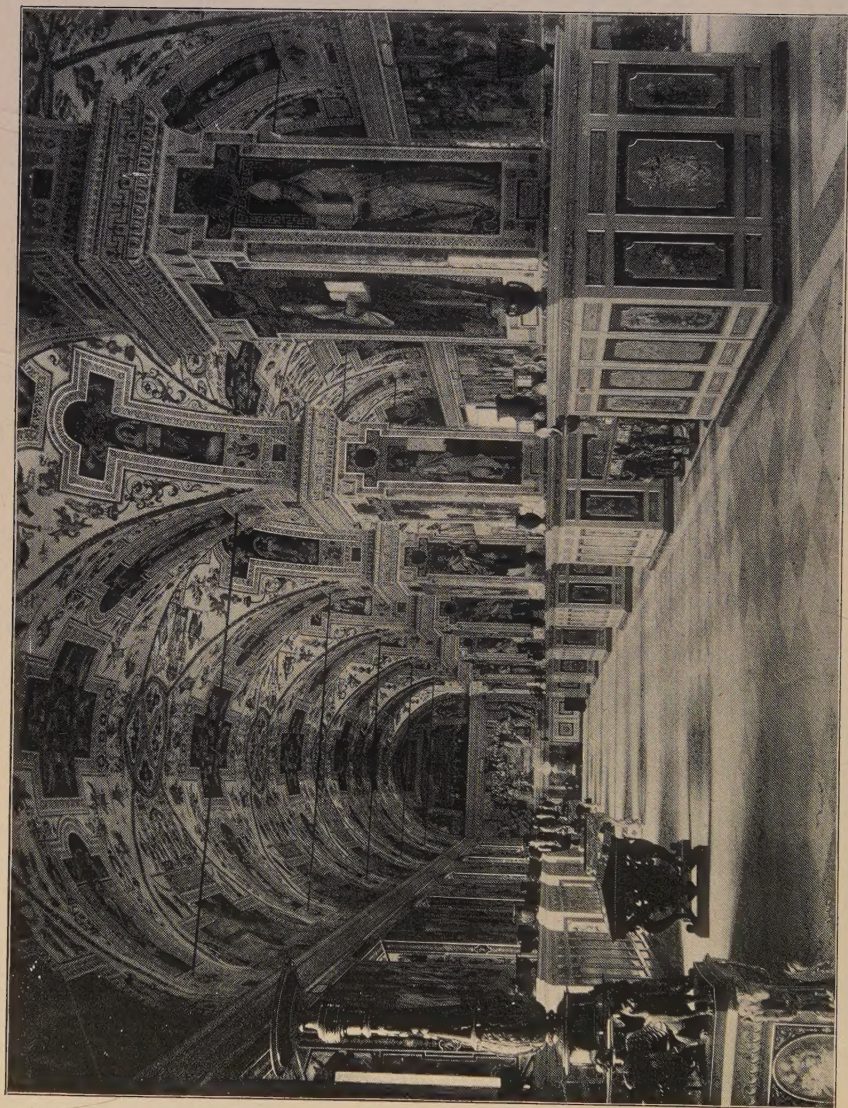
By RUSSELL STURGIS.

BOOKS are thought by many to form the most beautiful wall decoration which a room can receive. Not only to the lover of books are books delightful; their marshalled ranks, uniformed in morocco, dark brown, dark red, scarlet, green,—in hog-skin, in vellum and in calf; prettily contrasting in color and harmonized by the free use of gold,—this display, indeed, is one of the most comely things with which a wall surface can be adorned. Many a working library, however, is devoid of this charm. Mr. Darwin's workroom, with its piles of herbaria and *dossiers* lying flat on shelves with tags hanging out, and his books treated as "mere tools of his trade," torn in two when the volumes were too heavy—such a library, however noble and even awe-inspiring when the pervading spirit of the room has worked upon the beholder, is yet quite out of the line of decorative effect. But no one can be insensible to the beauty of a well-ordered display of books, even when the workman is among his books and the shelves show many a gap where volumes are temporarily out of place and in active use. In like manner, in the great libraries of Europe: the long row of halls filled by "The King's Library" in the British Museum, is as charming to walk through as the pic-

ture galleries of the Louvre. The Royal Library in the Hofburg, at Vienna, while richly adorned in an architectural way, is splendid, also, in its wall surfaces covered closely with well-bound volumes which tell a tale of ancient learning, and the library at St. Gallen is one of the most brilliantly successful pieces of decoration for a small and low public hall that has yet been devised. The books! They constitute the main feature of the scheme for the adornment of these ancient halls of learning.

Not that there has been neglect of the architectural features which, according to the ancient standard in such matters, should set off the books. The libraries we have named above, at Vienna and at St. Gallen, are famous instances of that. The Radcliffe Library at Oxford is more severely architectural than they, in that it reflects the severe Palladianism of England as against the excessive baroque of the German interiors; and the magnificent carved wood fittings of certain rooms of the National Library in Paris are worthy of the most careful study by those who wish to adorn the richer interiors of our own time.

The interior of the Vatican Library, that is to say of those rooms which constitute "the gallery" or the Library of Sixtus V., is decorated with the most



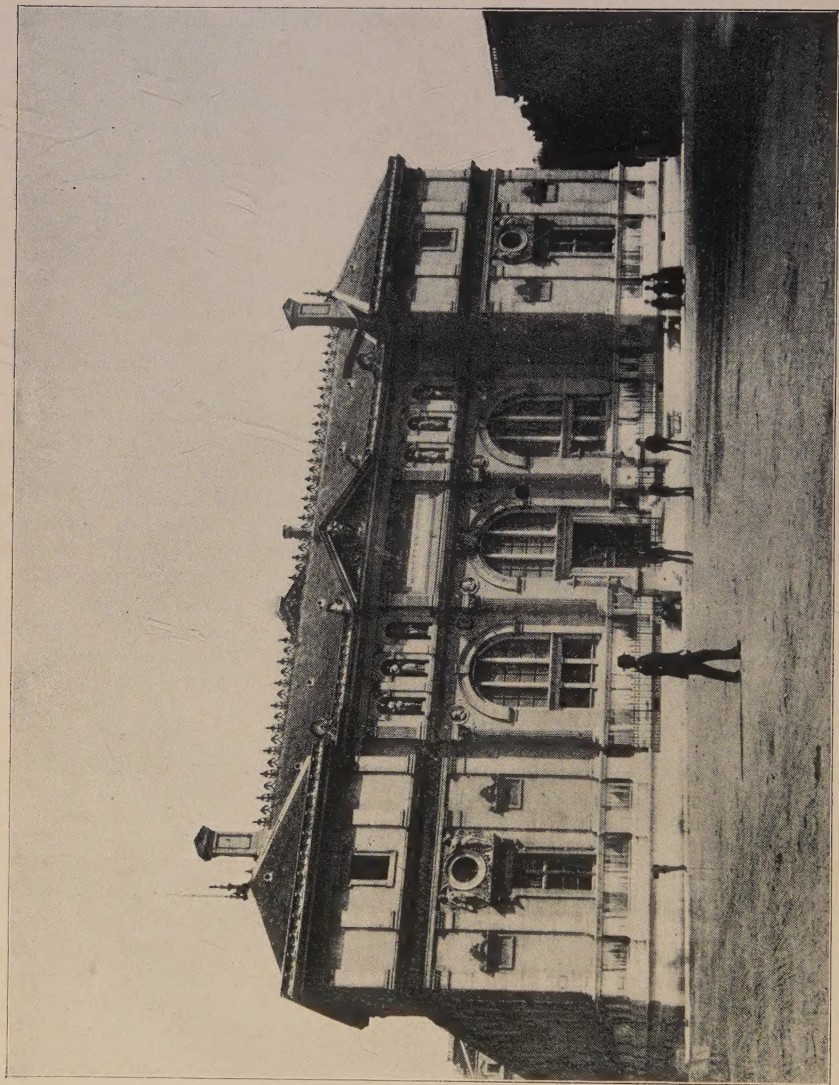
superb inlaying of its cases and painting of its vaults. The splendid library at Grenoble, lighted by a system of domes resting on pendentifs, has a decoration partly of books and partly of architectural treatment.

The modern library, however, when it is of any pretensions to size and system, disregards both these means of adornment. Neither the books nor yet the architectural fitting up of book-rooms are now in place. More scientific consideration of the problem has relegated the books to fireproof warehouses where they, the books, may be arranged as systematically as may be desired and without any loss of space; where the passages are narrow and are visited by the attendants of the library alone; where height from floor to floor,—that is to say, between galleries—is only such as allows the attendant to reach every shelf without leaving his stand upon the floor; where, in short, the books are stacked literally, and where the names “stack” and “stack-room” accurately describe the placing of the volumes of which the library is composed. Special volumes may, indeed, be required for exhibition. A painted miniature, a rare plate, a rich binding, may all need to be shown to the public, and for that purpose to be put under glass exactly as any other precious work of art of small size would be prepared for exhibition. But these are separated from their fellows and do not share in the general storage of the library, the books of which are there for easy access and rapid delivery to persons requiring them, and not for show at all.

The modern library, then, consists of a stackroom, which is a mere place of storage with convenient access to every corner and every remotest shelf; and of rooms for other purposes than storage, which are rooms in no way remarkable in themselves or distinct from the rooms of other public buildings. The exterior of the stackroom lends itself, indeed, to very unusual architectural treatment and of this, anon. The exterior of the other parts of the building does not differ really from the exterior of a city hall or a State house of size comparable to that

of the library itself. The reading-room for the general public is, perhaps, the largest necessary room. Special reading-rooms come next,—that is to say, the rooms in which certain particular lines of study may be more quietly pursued than in the larger room. There is also, perhaps, a delivery room, where books which are allowed to be taken away from the building are delivered to applicants, and the same room serves for the return of books brought back. These are the rooms which would naturally be treated in a dignified way, with high ceilings and with large windows for the free admission of light, at once, and for stately effect also, both within and without. These rooms naturally fill the more important stories, and their windows occupy the more important part of the exterior fenestration. Packing-rooms, bindery-rooms, rooms for the cataloguers, are numerous according to the size of the library, but the public has no need of access to them, and it seems inevitable that they should occupy basement or attic stories, or should front on a court: it being always provided that they have abundant light for the necessary carrying on of the continuous, day-long work which a large library requires. If, indeed, a library has among its treasures, books, prints and maps which should be displayed as works of art, separate rooms for this purpose may well be added, and the library becomes, in part at least, a museum of art. The distinction is not well maintained, and cannot be, in small libraries, where, indeed, the reading-room must serve also as a place of exhibition; but a large library should have the rooms for exhibition specially set apart for that purpose, because of the great annoyance to students caused by the coming and going of sight-seeing visitors.

As the illustrations of this number are chiefly views of exteriors, we are brought now to the consideration of what are the exterior effects natural to, and proper for, a large library, but it appears that no one of our illustrations shows the exterior of a stackroom. This part of the library building, its very centre and reason for being, has been better treated, perhaps, in the



LXXXIII.

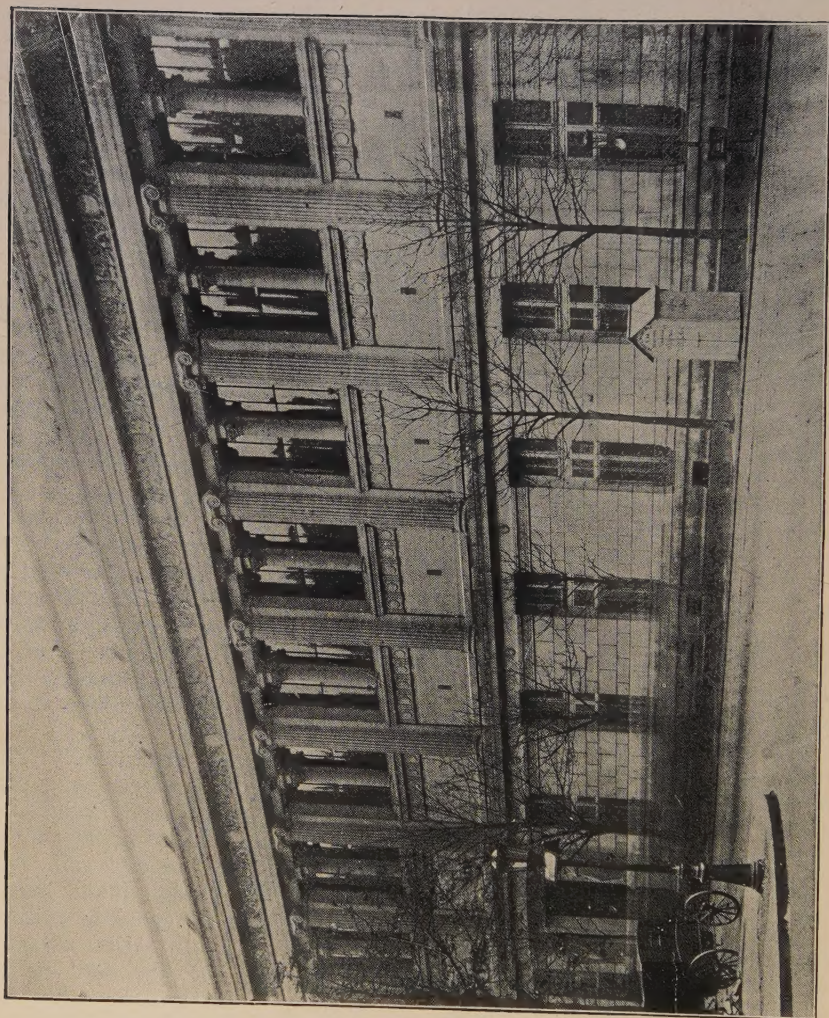
Library and Museum at Grenoble, France.

Congressional Library at Washington, than anywhere else. At least, no other instance comes to mind where so intelligent an arrangement of the lighting has been made. It is easy to put your books in the basement and to give them nothing but electric light, but that is not to face the difficulty or to solve the problem. If it be assumed that daylight is, on the whole, better and more wholesome, as it is certainly cheaper than electric light, then a well windowed stackroom is better than a dark one. The stackrooms at Washington, are, indeed, left in the interior, and the light comes to them from courts, from which alone their outer walls can be seen; but the treatment of these has been shown in this instance to be so easily made architectural that it is quite within possibility that a future great library will show the stackrooms as a part of its adorned exterior. As for the other rooms of the library, they can be put off with no characteristic treatment at all, as in the great National Library at Paris, or they can be treated without significance, with two long rows of round arched windows, as in the Royal Library at Munich. Or they can be gathered round a great rotunda and help buttress its dome, as in the Library of Columbia University, — that is to say, they can be treated in a wholly abstract way. The Library of St. Geneviève, at Paris, was especially arranged to show its books in the interior of a great hall, and the system of small windows below and large windows above was especially arranged for this; the large windows opening into the great hall above its wall of books. It has, however, been found perfectly feasible to apply this exterior, with but the slightest modifications, to the exterior of the public library at Boston, which has in its interior no approach whatever to the dispositions and arrangements of the Paris institution. This example seems to show how devoid of characteristic features the exterior of a library may be. The great library of the British Museum has no architectural exterior at all, as it is lost in the mass of buildings whose only face toward the world is the well known colon-

nade, which has neither beginning nor end, nor relation to the structure it adorns. The Royal Library at Stuttgart and the Ducal Library at Wolfenbüttel have agreeably disposed exteriors in the modern classic taste, the former being especially fortunate in the immense amount of light given to its interior. The same characteristic, that of abundant light, is found in the new public library at Chicago, but this characteristic, that of having abundant daylight furnished to their interiors, should be the characteristic of every public building, and no one of the structures last above named, can be said to differ in any way from what a building for public offices would be.

The purpose of these remarks is to point out that as yet no special characteristic of a library exterior can be said to exist. You provide large rooms and small rooms, you arrange them according to the best judgment of the director and the architect for convenience of daylight work; you open windows where they are most needed, and you compose such an exterior as seems to result from the circumstances of the case, but it would be a very exalted and very mystical sense of inner fitness in the design which would attempt to discriminate between the outside of the modern library and the outside of a public building of totally different purposes.

All except the stackroom! That, indeed, may be as refreshing a problem for the hard-witted architect to struggle with as he is liable to meet with in the busy modern world. If a great library building should ever be planned with strict regard to utility — that is to say, with strict regard to common sense — it may well be that the reading-rooms will be within and shut off from every noise, as the reading-rooms of the great libraries in London and in Paris are. If, then, the stackrooms should be arranged along the exterior, enclosing the courts which give light to the reading-rooms within, a really interesting problem of designing would be given the architect, and then, indeed, the library would grow to have an architectural physiognomy of its own.



LXXXIV.

Library of the Ecole de Médecine, Paris

Plates.

The series of illustrations given in this issue is of necessity extremely heterogeneous. In order to give a comprehensive collection of the principal or typical libraries, both past and present, it was considered desirable to show as great a number of buildings, and from as many countries and periods as possible. With this purpose in view the two Italian libraries from Venice and Rome begin the list. These are more archives than what we consider libraries in the modern sense. There is nothing in the least distinctive of the purpose for which they are now used in the plan or the architectural treatment of the exterior or interior of either one.

As we come down to more recent times the British Museum and Radcliffe Library at Oxford still retain something of the character of a treasure house although they are both working libraries.

Later still come the library of Ste. Geneviève, and the school libraries of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the Ecole de Medecine with a treatment of façade similar to that of Ste. Geneviève, which despite the criticism of Mr. Sturgis in the previous pages, has become a thoroughly and easily recognized architectural treatment, the reasonable and natural result of practical conditions.

This arrangement of a library building in which the second floor is used as a reading-room has many arguments in its favor, especially in libraries of moderate size. When this plan is adopted the design of the façade follows as a matter of course. Diffused light from above is desirable in a reading-room, and where book-cases or alcoves are arranged about this room it is perfectly reasonable that the lower portions of the windows should be filled with a curtain wall. There may be important differences in the arrangement of the large reading-rooms referred to by Mr. Sturgis, but in all these cases there is a general resemblance in the fact that the second floor (or certainly the portion lighted by the windows in the façade) is given almost

exclusively to a large reading-room. The arcaded treatment of the façade seems to express this very clearly, and the lower story with its stronger walls and smaller window openings is an equally logical expression of the purpose of the interior which is given up to working rooms which naturally require less light, and are of less relative importance in the general scheme of the building.

The small special libraries shown in the remaining plates are so simple in treatment and involve so few difficulties in planning that they hardly require separate consideration.

LXXXI.

LIBRARY OF ST. MARK, VENICE.

This is justly considered one of the masterpieces of Italian Renaissance architecture, and is without doubt the masterpiece of its architect, Sansovino. It stands on the Piazzetta, facing the Ducal Palace, and its position, as well as numerous points of similarity in design, suggest the comparison of the two buildings so dissimilar in style. Fergusson points out the features in which one or the other seems to him to excel. Architecturally, this is a most instructive comparison. Those who wish to follow it for themselves can find a section of the arcade of the Ducal Palace illustrated in Vol. I., No. 1, of THE BROCHURE SERIES.

LXXXII.

LIBRARY OF THE VATICAN, ROME.

The Vatican Library was founded by Pope Hilaire I., in the fifth century, and has been enlarged by each of his successors. It occupies one of the wings of the Vatican Palace adjoining the museum and the portion of the building designed by Bramante. The books are arranged in closed cases standing against the piers and walls. The decorations are of the richest type of the Italian Renaissance.

LXXXIII.

LIBRARY AND MUSEUM, GRENOBLE, FRANCE.

The library portion of this building is on the side hidden from view. The design is that of M. Charles Questel.



LXXXV.

Library of Ste. Genevieve, Paris.

LXXXIV.

LIBRARY OF THE ECOLE DE MEDECINE, PARIS.

The modern façade towards the Boulevard is by Ginain, and one of the most interesting examples of recent French architecture.

LXXXV.

LIBRARY OF STE. GENEVIEVE, PARIS.

This is the design of M. Henri Lebrouste.

LXXXVI.

LIBRARY OF THE ECOLE DES BEAUX-ARTS, PARIS.

This portion of the buildings of the school was designed by the architect, Duban.

National Library in Paris and in the Library of Congress in Washington.

LXXXVIII.

RADCLIFFE LIBRARY, OXFORD.

This building was designed by James Gibbs, one of the ablest and most noted English architects of the eighteenth century. Fergusson selects this as one of the two buildings upon which Gibbs' fame rests, although he points out that it is most conspicuously lacking in the expression of the purpose for which it was built. In many respects, especially from the utilitarian point of view, it must be considered a failure.



Queens College Library,

Oxford, England.

LXXXVII.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON.

Although an interesting and impressive example of the classic revival, this building, designed by Robert and Sidney Smirke, has been as severely criticized as any building in modern times. Its main fault is the disregard of the requirements for which it was intended; and its principal merit, aside from its imposing peristyle, is the great domed reading-room occupying the central court, originally intended to be open. This arrangement of a central circular reading-room has been followed in the

LXXXIX.

LIBRARY OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

XC.

LIBRARY OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

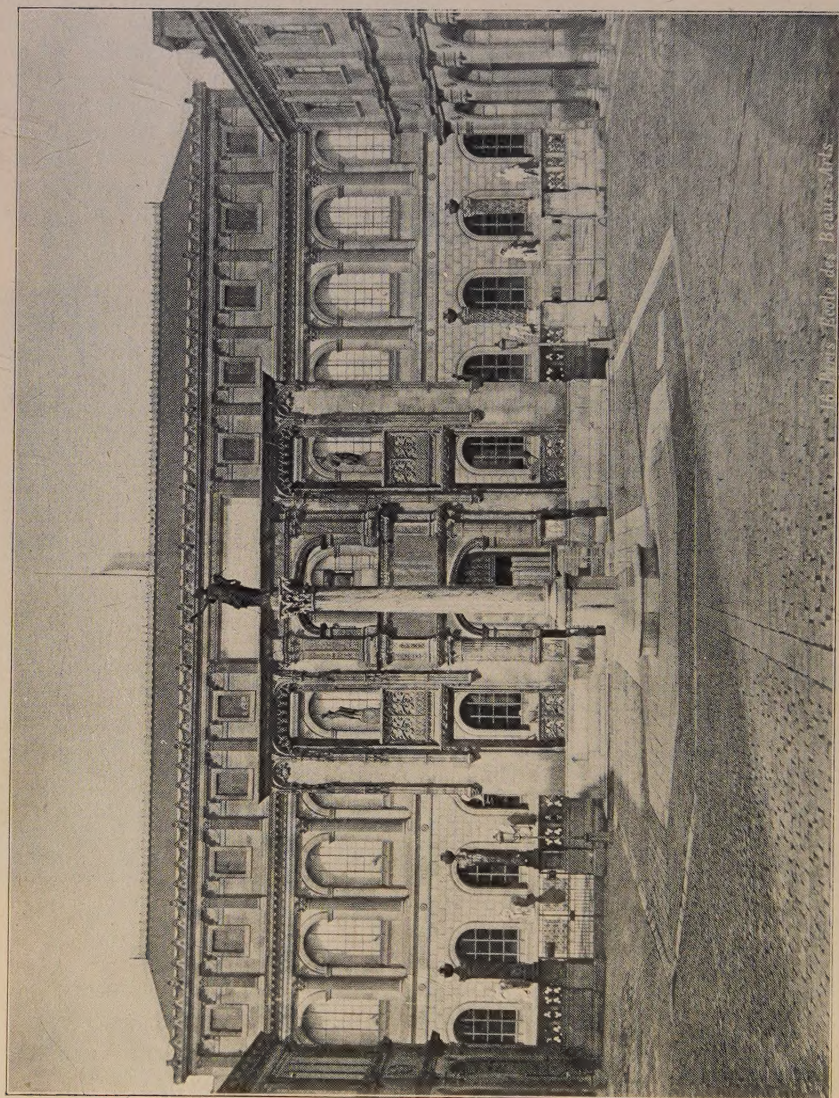
This is from the design of Sir Christopher Wren. The exterior facing on the courtyard is very effective, and recalls in massing and proportions the design of the Library of St. Mark in Venice.

XCI.

BODLEYAN LIBRARY, OXFORD.

XCII.

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY, BERLIN.



LXXXVI.

Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris.

PLANNING A LIBRARY.

FROM THE LIBRARIAN'S POINT OF VIEW.

BY WILLIAM E. FOSTER,

Librarian of the Providence, R.I., Public Library.

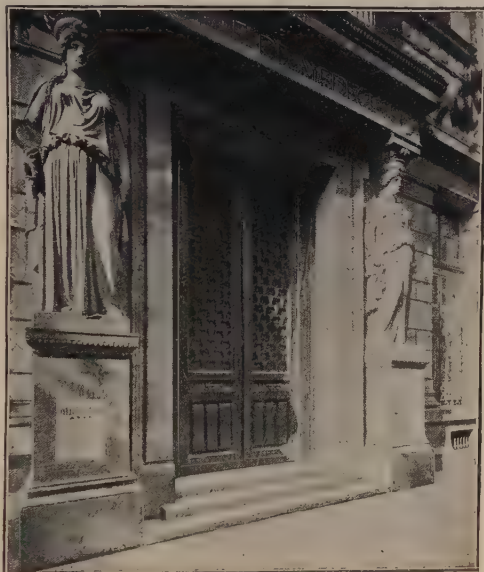
IT is certainly well to recognize that the "points of view" of the architect and the librarian are distinct from each other, but it would be a misfortune to regard them as necessarily antagonistic to each other.

On the contrary, the relation existing between the two, while planning a library building, might well be regarded as a kind of temporary partnership which had been entered into for the accomplishment of a given end. In the satisfaction of attaining that end, they both share;—that is to say, in securing such a building as meets most fully the demands alike of artistic and of practical considerations. If we may regard the architect as

being,—for the purposes under consideration,—the "spokesman" for his art, which he does well to regard as a jealous mistress, and the librarian as the "spokesman" for the practical needs of the library's future users, it is obvious that nothing will be gained on either side by resting satisfied with a low aim, or by stating the demands of the opposing considerations in any other than their maximum terms. It is the "resultant" of the two which will take form in the completed building.

To state the matter from the librarian's point of view, therefore, it may be said that the architect is entitled to precise information as to what the librarian would prefer to have, if he could get it. This is entirely reason-

able, since the details of a library building are only "incidental" with the architect, just as indeed the "building" phase of library work is only incidental with the librarian. This knowledge of practical needs cannot easily be made too definite or too precise, and it will be useful to glance at some of the processes by which the librarian himself will need to arrive at it, before he can impart it to the architect. Like most first-hand knowledge, it is chiefly the



Doorway, Ecole de Medecine, Paris.

result of personal observations which have been made, noted, and compared. But a prudent librarian will not fail to verify and correct his own observations by those of others, whether embodied in print, or obtained through comparing notes, verbally, with other librarians, or with members of his own staff, or with others who have observed carefully. Even an apparent misfortune such as an unduly prolonged stay in a building with exceptionally unfavorable conditions, while waiting



LXXXVII.
British Museum, London.

for a new building, may be utilized in a more effectual avoidance of these conditions in the new building. It is he who knows "where the shoe pinches" that can best suggest a change; and in the steps leading to the planning of all such details as lighting, heating, ventilation, protection from fire, protection from noise, protection from dust and, above all, convenient arrangement, such an experience ought to count. It is always to be borne in mind that it is the convenience of the readers rather than that of the employees that the planning of a library building takes into account. Certain "time-saving" details of library arrangement have sometimes been discussed as if they had chief or exclusive reference to the "time" of the employees. On the contrary, the time of the employees is not their own, but belongs to the public, and if by a faulty arrangement any of their time is unnecessarily or unduly wasted, it is the public that will pay the penalty in a more tedious wait, or a lengthened journey. For the readers, therefore, the librarian stands as "spokesman," in the steps leading to the planning of the building.

When, however, the librarian has availed himself of every conceivable opportunity for securing the observations needed, and has intelligently and patiently digested the results, it is a question how best to make this information available. There is no method which can compare, in definiteness and in effectiveness, with that of drawing a plan to a scale. The librarian does

not here enter the domain of the architect, — a practice to which every sound principle is opposed. On the contrary, by thus outlining the rooms of the future building, — roughly, to be sure, but with essential accuracy, since the dimensions are drawn to a scale, — he simply clarifies his own ideas of the requirements involved. A single one of these plans, however, is not enough. Let him decide on the total number of rooms which will be included, as twenty or more. Then let him endeavor to free his mind of all precon-

ceived ideas, and rearrange these twenty separate rooms, — somewhat as a child might rearrange the blocks of his toy block house, — in every conceivable order, on the mathematical principle of "permutations." In drawing a new outline plan for each one of these successive rearrangements, he will find that some will at once show themselves to be wholly incompatible with the requirements, but if he carefully redraws the others, in detail, shifting a given

room from one end of the building to the other, or even, in some instances, from one floor to another, — he will be surprised at the new light which will thus break in on his mind. Certain relations or juxtapositions which had been tacitly assumed to be necessary and obvious now no longer seem so "obvious." Should this prolonged and minute comparison of relations lead the librarian to the selection of one of the numerous rearrangements, as expressing, on the whole, a maximum of agreement with the given requirements, this is still not something to be regarded as



Doorway of Ste. Genevieve. Paris.



LXXXVIII.

Radcliffe Library, Oxford, England.

a "plan," proper. It merely serves as "materials" for answering the inquiries of the architect. It is, as already indicated above, what the librarian would prefer to have, *if he could get it*; and he is therefore not unprepared for the inevitable deductions, diminutions and modifications. But these modifications are factors which must in any case be allowed for, and it is consequently only a "resultant" of the various competing tendencies which the instructed librarian expects to get. Nor does he regard his own interpretation of the apparently best arrangement as final. This field, — that of arrangement, — is indeed one in which it is peculiarly needful for the librarian to familiarize himself with the minutest details, even including the location of the book-cases, the furniture, etc.; yet arrangement is something that belongs, as truly as does design, within the province of the architect. Moreover, while the librarian will do well to exercise, whenever possible, "the scientific use of the imagination," this is, with him, only "an incident," while with the architect it is a part of his life-long training. Surely any client, — whether a librarian or not, — who should neglect to profit by these fruits of his architect's facility and insight, would show a strange blindness, to say the least.

Before considering his own task complete, however, the librarian should thoroughly inform himself on some of the points named below. With a view to the demands of future extension, he will need not only to consider the size of his lot, and that of the adjoining lots, and the probable annual rate of increase of his volumes, but also to map out the actual lines on which the future additions to the building must apparently run and yet violate no principle of convenient arrangement. He needs also to take into account economy of time and space, from the reader's point of view, wherever possible. "A straight line," it is never to be forgotten, "is the shortest distance between two points," and the relation of the place where the books are, to the place where the reader is, should always illustrate this principle. It is in connection with

practical details of this kind that his prolonged canvassing of the matter with the separate members of his staff ought to count for something. All these details the librarian will need to correlate with each other. Again, he will need to take into account economy of administration, as well as economy of time and space, in planning the total number of attendants, with special reference to the probable amount of funds available (present and future). Should he be able so to compass his arrangement of rooms and his scheme for "manning" them, as to combine the two considerations, he will indeed be fortunate. A modern library, moreover, needs to be so planned as to provide large spaces for readers as well as for the housing of books; and a generous share of its space is given up to such rooms as study rooms, reference rooms, etc. Here books are ranged on open shelves, and provided with every facility for enabling the reader to make the most effective use of them, on the spot. To estimate the probable number of readers or students who must thus be provided for — in addition to the not inconsiderable space appropriated for the purposes of delivery of books for home use — is a distinctly more difficult problem than to forecast the annual increase of the books. In most of the libraries where it has thus far been attempted, the estimate has proved to be too low. To the above should be added, of course, the various considerations in regard to lighting, height of book-cases, protection from noise and other interruptions, embodied in Mr. Charles C. Soule's excellent summary of "Points of agreement among librarians"* (as to library buildings), as well as the increasing tendency to open shelves in all libraries.

Such are some of the ideals which the librarian has most at heart and is bound to defend. It is not inappropriate to inquire what should be his attitude towards the architect's ideals. It is true that the librarian, as above stated, is here to be regarded as the spokesman of the public's practical needs. It is true also that "a little knowledge" of architecture cannot fail

*See page 185.



LXXXIX.

Library of St. John's College Oxford, England.

to be a dangerous thing to any librarian who is not continually impressed by the inadequacy of his own knowledge. Nevertheless, it is difficult to see what would be gained, on either side, by a total unfamiliarity, on the part of the librarian, with all that is significant and inspiring in architecture; and it may safely be said that he should be a man to whom a noble design would not appeal in vain, and to whom a notable opportunity on the part of the architect would be for him also a source of satisfaction. Indeed, the problems which engage the architect in the planning of a library building are neither few nor slight. Just as the sculptor who wishes to reproduce his statue from a human model must first have learned the location of the systems of bones and muscles, of veins and of nerves, that are found below the surface, so the architect whose aim is to give the artistically successful outward expression to a library building must first know the nature of the operations within the building, and the complex relations which there exist. For this information, as above indicated, he turns to the librarian. Moreover, since individuality is always a highly prized factor, in architecture as in sculpture, the nearer the architect can come to expressing in his design some feature which belongs not merely to the type in general, but to this individual building, the closer he will approach to his ideal standard of success. Nor is this solely a question concerned with the different varieties of library buildings—as the points where in a college library will differ from a public library—but it is involved in those perplexing questions which from time to time arise from the apparent clashing of the artistic requirements with the practical demands. It has more than once happened that an encounter with such a problem as this has put the architect “on his mettle.” None but the best results, therefore, are to be looked for when, as in instances familiar to the present writer, the architect has held strongly to the requirements of his art, but has been eager to learn and meet the library’s practical needs, while the librarian, holding with equal steadfastness to

every practical demand, has nevertheless rejoiced in every instance where the architect has triumphed over the difficulties of a perplexing situation, and thereby brought his art to a higher level.

Brochure Series Competitions.

During the coming year a series of competitions in drawing and design will form a regular department of *THE BROCHURE*. The subjects set will be sufficiently various to afford opportunity for the display of ability in many lines, and not so technical as to be prohibitive to any but specialists. At least six of these competitions will be announced in the forthcoming volume; and as many more as the interest of our readers seems to warrant.

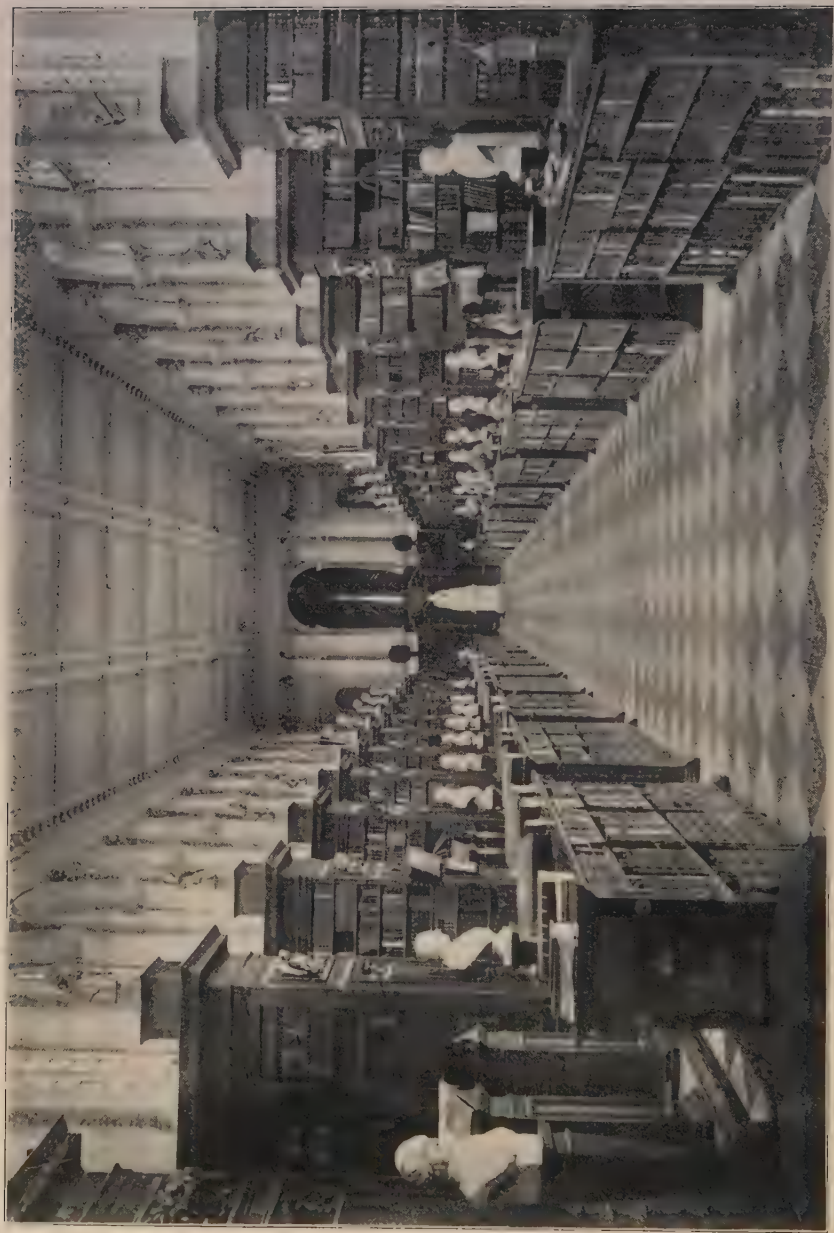
The result of former competitions has been so gratifying, both in number and excellence of designs submitted, that the publishers look forward to making this department in future a regular and important feature of the magazine.

The drawings in *COMPETITION A*, which was announced in the July issue, have all been examined and passed upon by the judges,—Mr. C. Howard Walker, Mr. Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue and the Editor of *THE BROCHURE*. The prize drawing and the brief criticisms of the judges will be printed in the December number, together with some of the most interesting designs.

It might be well to warn intending competitors that their designs cannot be considered unless they conform in every respect to the required conditions; a warning suggested by the fact that some of the best designs submitted in *COMPETITION A* were necessarily excluded on this account.

The size and proportions of drawings should be carefully observed as this is of the first importance.

COMPETITION B, which is announced on advertising page vii. of this issue, propounds a very interesting subject, bringing in as it does the application of color as a factor in the design. The result of this Competition is to be announced in the February issue of the new Volume.



XC.

Library, Trinity College, Cambridge, England.

The Brochure Series

of Architectural Illustration.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY

BATES & GUILD CO.,

13 EXCHANGE STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

Subscription Rate per year . . . 50 cents, in advance

Special Club Rate for five subscriptions . . . \$2.00

Entered at the Boston Post Office as Second-class Matter.

While the Editor of THE BROCHURE SERIES cannot hold himself responsible for the care of unsolicited photographs, drawings or manuscripts which may be submitted to him, he will always be glad to consider them; and will return those that he cannot use when postage for that purpose is provided.

As this special number of THE BROCHURE SERIES is, from the character of its contents, likely to find its way into the hands of many readers who are not subscribers, the publishers take the opportunity to set forth here its character and aims.

THE BROCHURE prints each year over one hundred half-tone engravings from photographs of European architecture, the subjects being carefully chosen as those likely to be of most value and interest to architects and draughtsmen. The list of the plates in Volumes II. and III. printed on advertising page v. of this issue will give an idea of the kind of illustrations which may be expected. Each issue deals with some particular building or class of subjects; the issue preceding this, for instance, illustrated in detail the Great Staircase of the Chateau of Blois; the succeeding issue will contain photographs of beautiful Italian holy-water fonts; the first number of the new volume will illustrate Sicilian churches.

It will be evident that such pictures are of great value, not alone to architects and draughtsmen and students of art, for whom they are primarily intended, but also to all those to whom the best of the world's architecture appeals. An article of detailed description and comment accompanies each set of illustrations.

Although these photographs and the description of them form the chief

features of the magazine they by no means constitute its entire contents. Articles of various kinds are constantly published which interest all who in any way have to deal with architecture. In the current volume, for example, the lives and work of four of America's best architectural draughtsmen are reviewed, and illustrated by examples of their drawings.

Under the caption of Club Notes, the doings of the Architectural clubs and of their members are regularly chronicled.

Competitions, in which a very lively interest has been shown, are set from time to time, and in the coming volume will be more frequent than in the past. That which is announced on advertising page viii. of this issue may be taken as a specimen.

Beginning with the first issue of the new year (January, 1898), the publishers will open a column for the reviews of books dealing with architecture and the related fine arts. This department will deal with such books from the side of the purchaser. That is, it will aim to tell the reader what the book is, what it contains, and what, from the point of view of an authoritative writer, will be its value to a purchaser. As architectural and art books are expensive yet necessary "tools," it is hoped that, to the buyer who wishes to expend his money wisely, it will be a valuable guide. As a convenience, the publishers have also arranged to supply at the listed price; any book, good, bad or indifferent, mentioned in this column.

A new feature, which will add to the value of THE BROCHURE as a reference book, will be a combined index to Volumes I., II. and III., which is to be issued with the last number of the present volume. This index will be a complete guide to the three hundred photographs of architectural subjects previously illustrated in the magazine. At the end of the sixth volume another combined index will be issued. Thus, as THE BROCHURE more and more completely covers the field of European architecture, it will become a more and more complete and valuable work of reference.



xci.

Bodleian Library, Oxford, England.

POINTS OF AGREEMENT AMONG LIBRARIANS AS TO LIBRARY ARCHITECTURE.

BY CHARLES C. SOULE,

Trustee of the Brookline, Mass., Public Library.

IT has been stated that architects can get little help from librarians in planning libraries, because librarians do not agree as to what they want. This misapprehension probably arises from the fact that library

consider problems of building, appear to be unanimously agreed.

To librarians, most of these propositions will appear like truisms; but the necessity for formulating them appears in the fact that very few library build-



Old Riding School Library, Welbeck Abbey, England.

literature, while it abounds in discussions of mooted points of construction, contains apparently no recent statement of elementary principles. To elucidate these principles some preliminary knowledge of the subject is required, and architects, asking advice without experience of their own, draw out and emphasize the striking differences of opinion, rather than the substantial agreements among librarians.

It is the purpose of this paper to state certain principles of construction as to which those prominent American librarians who have had occasion to

ings erected in this country during the last ten years conform to all, and some of them conform to none, of the axiomatic requirements.

Librarians are generally agreed as to the following fundamental principles of library architecture:

A library building should be planned for library work. The work of a library is (or should be) as definitely marked out as that of a school, or a hospital, or a factory; and the building to contain it should be planned with as much care, and as intelligent a regard to its proper functions.

Every library building should be planned especially for the kind of

* Reprinted by kind permission of the Editor, from the *Library Journal*. [Vol. 16, No. 12, December, 1891.]



XCII.

National Library Berlin.

work to be done, and the community to be served. Libraries differ widely in scope. The college library, the State library, the reference library, the professional library, the town library — while they have much in common — have different requirements as to rooms and arrangements; and libraries of the same class may differ as to probabilities of growth, conditions of equipment, and opportunities for usefulness.

The interior arrangement ought to be planned before the exterior is considered. Within such necessary limitations as the size and shape of the lot and the amount of money available, the first consideration of the librarian, building committee and architect should be, not what exterior style, but what interior plan, is best for the library.

No convenience of arrangement should ever be sacrificed for mere architectural effect. While the architect may suggest changes of plan which will improve the appearance of the building without sacrificing any point of usefulness, no essential conveniences for library work ought to be surrendered. It is far better that a library should be plain, or even ugly, than that it should be inconvenient. A steam-engine, superb in finish but faulty in construction, is properly condemned. A library is a literary engine requiring equally perfect construction to do economical and efficient work.

The plan should be adapted to probabilities and possibilities of growth and development. In constructing a library it may be wise to build only for the needs of the present generation; but room and opportunity should always be allowed for future development. The community may grow, the library may increase beyond expectation, its methods may change, its sphere may enlarge, or the progress of library science may develop improvements in administration, requiring changes and enlargement.

Simplicity of decoration is essential in the working-rooms and reading-rooms. If money can be spared, the exterior of a library building, its approaches, entrances and corridors may be embellished to any extent; but

the rooms intended for use, while they ought to be attractive in form and color, should be free from that showy decoration which attracts sight-seers to disturb the quiet and distract the attention of workers and readers.

A library should be planned with a view to economical administration. No library can be so liberally endowed as to be beyond the need of economy, in time as well as in money. A well-planned library can be administered more smoothly and less expensively than a badly planned one. In order to save money, expedite work, and insure prompt service to the public, the rooms of a library should be so arranged as to require as few attendants, as few steps, and as little labor as possible. The librarian's room should be near the centre of the system, within easy reach of the public on the one hand, and the working-rooms on the other.

The rooms for public use should be so arranged as to allow complete supervision with the fewest possible attendants. The danger of mutilation or theft of books or periodicals is lessened, if every part of a reading-room is in plain view of the delivery clerk or of some other attendant.

There should be as much natural light as possible in all parts of the building. No artificial light can be as healthy for attendants and for books, so agreeable to the eyes, or so economical, as daylight.

Windows should extend up to the ceiling, to light thoroughly the upper part of every room. With high windows, and walls and ceiling of a light color, the upper part of a room holds and diffuses daylight. With low windows it may be a cavern of gloom.

Windows in a book-room should be placed opposite the intervals between book-cases. In planning a book-room or stack, the book-cases ought to be located and the windows ought to be so arranged as to cast light, and not shadow, down all the aisles.

The arrangements of books in tiers of alcoves and galleries around a large hall is considered entirely obsolete. The old style of shelving around the walls, in alcoves, and in galleries,

has been generally superseded by the use of floor-cases,—that is, double book-cases, arranged in parallel lines across the floor of a room,—or “stacks,” which are tiers of floor-cases one close above another. Shelves around the walls and in alcoves are still used in small libraries not likely to grow much; and in libraries where access to the books is unrestricted and space can be spared. A form of shelving which is growing in favor, is an arrangement of floor-cases in large rooms, with space between the tops of the book-cases and the ceiling, for ventilation and the diffusion of light.

three feet from the floor. This form of shelving leaves more elbow room in passing, admits more light, and provides a temporary resting-place for books in use or in transit.

Three feet between floor-cases is ample for all purposes of administration.

No shelf, in any form of book-case, should be higher than a person of moderate height can reach without a step-ladder.

Shelving for folios and quartos should be provided in every book-room.

Straight flights are preferable to circular stairs.



Durham Cathedral Library,

Durham, England.

The plan for reference libraries so strongly advocated by Dr. Poole (classifying the books in departments, and arranging them for storage and study in separate rooms, under one roof) has so far influenced library construction that modern library plans provide accommodations for readers near the books they want to use, whatever system of shelving is adopted.

In a circulating library the books most in use should be shelved in floor-cases close to the delivery desk. In the floor-cases of a reference library the upper shelves should be narrower than those below, with a ledge about

Communications by speaking tubes and bells should be arranged between the working rooms of a library.

So far, prominent librarians who have given special study to library construction, appear to agree unanimously. Other points of general agreement—such, for instance, as objection to lofty halls for use as reading-rooms or delivery-rooms,—have been omitted where anyone could be found who doubted their universal application. On many such points librarians are approaching unanimity through frank discussion and practical experiment.



XCIII.

Font in Siena Cathedral.